Agricultural Items Permitted for Exports

755. SHRI SUNDER SINGH BHANDARI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) what are the various agricultural items that have been permitted;

(b) whether any quotas for export such items has been fixed for the year and if so, what is the amount of foreign exchange in each case is likely to be earned; and

(c) what are the names of the low value agricultural items listed to be imported indicating the quantity, comparative export and import price of the concerned items?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): (a) and (b) Major agricultural items being exported and the targets fixed for them in value terms for the year 1992-93 are as under:

Sl. No.	Item	Target 92-93 US$ million
1.	Rice	275
2.	Tobacco	175
3.	Spices	165
4.	Cashewnuts	300
5.	Oil meals and oil seeds	500
6.	Sugar	550
7.	Fresh fruits, vegetables	425

(c) No such list has been prepared. However, the Government's over-all policy is to consider imports of items of mass consumption, as and when there are difficulties on supply or price front and having regard to the interests of both the producers and the consumers.

Export of Spices

756. SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a number of countries rejected our import consignments of spices on the plea of contamination during the year 1992-93; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): (a) and (b) Government has information about only one case of rejection of a consignment of 500 bags of Black Pepper of 25 Kgs. each (Invoice value US $24250/- claim value US$ 45351/-) to USA in 1992-93. This was rejected on the ground of presence of mammalian excreta.

Effect of Recession in Tea Industry

757. DR. BAPU KALDATE: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the recession hit tea Industry is launching a massive exercise for pushing of tea exports to the hard currency areas;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof and what steps are being taken by Government to achieve the fixed targets; and

(c) what is the extent up to which the break-up of erstwhile USSR has resulted in the losses to India?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKERJEE): (a) to (c) In view of the collapse of the erstwhile USSR the tea industry is launching an intensive campaign during 1993 to diversify our markets. Buyer-seller meets and participation in various fairs etc. are being taken up. Government is rendering assistance to the tea industry in its promotional efforts through the Tea Board of India.

It is too early to assess the loss, if any, on account of the break up of the erstwhile USSR. However, the figures of shipment licences issued in respect of export of tea to CIS countries (erstwhile USSR) was 45.27 m.kgs during 1992 as against 109.96 m. kgs in 1991 indicating a decline of 64.69 m. kgs.

Utilising Marketing expertise of MMTC

758. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the MMTC is on the look out for viable alternatives in marketing operations to make optimal use of its huge marketing infrastructure and expertise;

(b) if so, what are the details of new areas identified for optimal use of marketing network and expertise of MMTC;

(c) whether MMTC has approached international manufactures and trading companies to explore the possibilities of marketing collaborations; and

(d) the response from the international/foreign organisations to the proposals made by MMTC and details of agreements signed in this regard, if any?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. In addition to the existing lines of activities, such as minerals, metals, fertilizers etc. the new areas of activities identified are in the fields of agro and marine products, gems and Jewellery, textiles, leather and chemicals. Proposals for setting up joint ventures with buy-back arrangements and investment proposals having import substitution angle are being explored. These efforts have not so far led to any agreements being concluded.

Second Phase of Trade Reforms

759. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are launching the second phase of trade reforms; and

(b) if so what are the details thereof, particularly structural reforms finalised/ envisaged and distortion in tariff structure pruning of negative list and promoting of genuine self-reliance and exit policy and other trade related reforms formulated/ finalised?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) Reform is an ongoing process. The structural reforms undertaken in July-August 1991 and consolidated in Exim Policy 1992—97, are aimed at enhancing India's export capabilities and promoting self-reliance under a deregulated framework of foreign trade. The reforms consist of a gradual elimination of quantitative, licensing and other discretionary controls including pruning of Negative Lists, provision of export linked imports, reduction of import licensing, strengthening of export incentives and removal of procedural irritants through simplification and streamlining of policies and procedures.

Import of Ore from Japan

760. SHRI DIGVIJAY Singh: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any official delegation has recently visited Tokyo (Japan) last week and requested to import 10 mt. Ore in the financial year 1993-94;

(b) whether any agreement has been arrived at with Japan on this issue;

(c) if so, what are the details thereof;

(d) what is the total value of the imported items in Indian currency; and

(e) what is the amount of foreign currency that India will have to pay to get 10 mt. Ore?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKERJEE): (a) No, Sir. However, an official delegation visited Japan in January, 1993 and